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ART. XI.—CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *History of the United Netherlands, from the Death of William the Silent to the Twelve Years' Truce*,—1609. By JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, D. C. L., Corresponding Member of the Institute of France; Author of "The Rise of the Dutch Republic." In Four Volumes. Vol. III., 1590–1600; Vol. IV., 1600–1609. *With Portraits*. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1868.

THESE volumes contain an account of the events of the last twenty years of the war which followed the rise of the Dutch Republic, and which ended with the Twelve Years' Truce. The most important characters of the period are Philip II., Henry of Navarre, Elizabeth, James I., Olden-Barneveld, Maurice of Nassau, Alexander Farnese, and Spinola. In the next rank may be placed the names of the German Archduke Albert, nephew and son-in-law of Philip II., the Spanish Duke of Lerma, the French Turenne, Duke of Bouillon, the Duke of Mayenne, De Béthune, Duke of Sully, the English Vere, the Dutch Heemskerk, Jeannin, President of the Parliament of Burgundy, and Réchardot, President of Artois; for these men, though not the heads of great states or great armies, had much to do with the history of the time.

The history is that of the growing prosperity and power of the United Provinces, and of the waning prosperity and power of Spain. Its most interesting episodes are the successful efforts of Henry of Navarre to secure the crown of France, and the maritime expeditions of the Netherlands towards the North Pole and around the Southern capes of each hemisphere. The most important tendency of the period is the tendency towards liberty. The century which closed half-way through it—the most important, save the first, of the sixteen centuries which followed the coming of Christ—must always be the object of the profoundest attention. The Reformation, and the wars which followed it, invest it with an enduring interest. Between the years 1590 and 1610 the long contest between the Netherlands and the great empire which Charles V. bequeathed to Philip II. ended in the success of the former. For the first time for ages the rights of the people were vindicated and acknowledged. The divine right of kings received a blow from which it never recovered. The determined inhabitants of the Low Countries made the free principles which they advocated triumph over every obstacle. Reforming the military system of Europe, improving in martial science, campaigning patiently

and fearlessly in a flooded country against the best soldiers and generals of the time, besieging and besieged, fighting as bravely and with more uniform success on sea than on land, taxing themselves with unstinting patriotism and self-sacrifice, increasing their means not only by industry and skill at home, but by the boldest enterprises at the ends of the earth, resisting with equal firmness and skill the violence and treachery of the open enemy and the wiles of the pretended friend, the boors and burghers proved themselves a nation, and stood in all evil hours till their final perseverance ended in securing their independence and extorting recognition from the crowned heads of all the countries that warred against them or coveted their territory. The skill and spirit of the participants may make the events of war and diplomacy interesting, though no great principles should be involved, and the contest promise no other issue than an increase of power or territory to one of the contending parties,—or the struggle may be such in itself as to attract attention, though all its characters and incidents be commonplace; but a double interest attaches to the drama in which Maurice and Barneveld played leading parts. The stage was limited only by the geographical knowledge of the time. The actors were kings and accomplished soldiers and able statesmen. They stood surrounded by disciplined armies and earnest peoples, while the ocean beyond was covered by their fleets. The prizes for which they contended were the greatest for which men can contend. Territorial aggrandizement, strengthening of frontiers, increase of revenue, were among the smallest of the interests involved. The rights of man were at stake, and civil and religious liberty hung on the issue.

A historian does wisely who seeks his theme in such a period. The interest inherent in his subject will lend his work a certain charm, though his task be but passably performed. If he be a man whose resolute industry enables him to lay his foundation strong and wide and deep, and who adds to that essential quality imagination, eloquence, quick perceptions, and ready sympathies, he is likely to confer a benefit on his kind by writing, and is sure to earn for himself an ample reward of gratitude and fame.

Mr. Motley has shown such wisdom and has earned such a reward. His success in treating his subject has been almost as brilliant as its selection was judicious. His temperament and his character are both singularly propitious to the purpose of his life. His tenacity of purpose is as thorough as his pulse is full. His place among historians is high and sure. The time has gone by when there was need to dwell upon his general characteristics as a historian. They are familiarly known. It remains to give such brief account as space permits of the contents of

these volumes, and to make such remarks upon their composition as may seem appropriate.

The first volume (Volume III. of the whole work) begins with the year 1590, when Henry III. of France had just been assassinated, and succeeded, in name, by Charles X., but really by the League, with the Duke of Mayenne at its head. The throne of France was claimed by Henry of Navarre, and coveted by Philip II., who was concentrating his forces for an invasion of the country, and giving his general, Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, directions to do his utmost to conquer it, under pretence of assisting the Holy League. Elizabeth was pursuing her usual policy of giving the rebellious Netherlanders just so much help as might suffice to prevent their subjugation by Philip, and no more. The civil affairs of the Netherlands were, for the most part, directed by Barneveld, and their armies were commanded by Maurice of Nassau. It was fortunate for the young Republic that she possessed such men. The consummate statesman was working harmoniously with the young soldier, and the latter was soon to prove that his military capacity was of the highest order of the period. He had studied his profession with the utmost diligence, and his practical capacity was equal to his theoretical knowledge. He had brought the patriot army to a condition of great excellence, and he soon began to use it with effect; for, while Alexander was busy with his preparations for the French campaign, he surprised the city of Breda, and took many other towns and strong places.

While monarchs schemed and intrigued, and soldiers fought, the young republic, feeling the genial influence of freedom, made rapid progress in the development of industry, and enjoyed a prosperity unknown in Spain or France, or the obedient provinces. Neighboring nations, though not directly interested in the war, felt some of the inconveniences which are inseparable from its existence, and, holding the old-fashioned notions as to the rights of sovereigns, were disposed to complain of the unreasonable persistence of the Netherlanders in the strife which vexed them; but their complaints led to nothing more than respectful, but manly, replies.

In the month of March, 1590, Henry of Navarre defeated the Leaguers, under Mayenne, at Ivry. His victory enabled him to lay siege to Paris, and, by midsummer, he had reduced the city to great straits. Farnese was ordered, by Philip, to march to its relief; and he obeyed, though against his judgment, and most unwillingly. He exerted his remarkable abilities to the utmost, in overcoming the difficulties in which his sovereign had permitted want of money and want of credit to involve him, and led an army across the frontier, in the beginning

of August, and reached the neighborhood of Paris near the end of the month. Henry reluctantly suspended the siege at his coming, and advanced to meet him. He desired a battle, which Farnese equally desired to avoid. A fortnight was sufficient to determine the result of the expedition. By the middle of September, Henry found himself completely outgeneralled by the skilful Italian. Paris was relieved, and the disappointed army of Henry fell to pieces. Farnese gave his army a fortnight's rest, and then returned, with his laurels, to the Netherlands.

The successes of Maurice, in the campaigns of 1591, were numerous and important. He besieged and took many important cities and fortresses, and secured the control of valuable strategic points, river-courses, and communications. He thus secured great direct gains to the Commonwealth; but it might well be considered that a more important service than any other he had rendered was his showing the world that the Republic possessed a soldier who could play the game of war, on equal terms, against the greatest living master of the art.

Meanwhile, war raged in France, and all over France, where baron fought with viscount in one province, and duke with marshal, constable, or prince, in another and another. Henry, aided in men by Elizabeth, and in money by the States, made head in Brittany and Normandy against the League and the Spaniards; and, before the end of the year, had laid siege to Rouen, and was fast reducing the place to extremities. Paris, freed from the pressure of siege, was suffering from the despotism of the sixteen lords of the market-halls, who ruled in the name of the populace, and as representatives of the League. Their tyranny culminated in the execution of Brisson, president of the Parliament of Paris, in November; and their power was destroyed within less than thirty days by the decided conduct of Mayenne, who hung four of their leaders.

In the year 1592 Henry continued the siege of Rouen, and had carried it almost to a successful completion, when Farnese again appeared upon the scene, again outgeneralled Henry, again raised the siege, and so saved the whole coast of Normandy for his master and for the League. In the same year, Maurice, availing himself of the opportunity afforded him by Farnese's French expedition, besieged and took Steenwyck and Coeworden. His great opponent, Farnese, the most dangerous enemy in the field of the young Republic, died at the end of this year. The States were much disturbed, at this period, by depredations committed by the English upon their commerce, and the substantial impossibility of obtaining any redress. After much delay and infi-

nite pains, the Republic succeeded in exciting the wrath of Elizabeth at these outrages, and a somewhat better state of things succeeded.

The principal military events of the years 1593 and 1594 were the capture of Gertruydenburg and Greningen by Maurice. But the conversion of Henry to the Catholic faith, his elevation to the throne of France, and the downfall of the League, overshadowing military failures and successes, made these years an epoch in the history of the time, while the steady advance of the principles of religious toleration, and the retreat of the Inquisition, keeping pace with the successes of the Netherlands, give a special moral interest to the period. The relations of Henry and the Republic were growing closer, much to the dissatisfaction of Elizabeth, but the interests of all three continued to make opposition to Spain a necessity. The political and military events of the years 1595 and 1596 were not especially interesting or important. In 1595 Henry declared war against Philip, and some indecisive hostilities followed. In 1596 the Cardinal-Archduke Albert, brother of the Emperor Rudolph, was appointed by Philip to the command of the obedient provinces, a post which he continued to hold until the Twelve Years' Truce. In the same year the Spaniards took Calais, and the Dutch fleet destroyed a great Spanish fleet in the harbor of Cadiz, and took the city, but unwisely neglected, in obedience to the urgency of the commander of the English naval contingent, to hold the place. A treaty was entered into, by England, France, and the Dutch Republic which outwardly was fair to the eye, but inwardly was full of duplicity, on the part of the French and English. Within three months of its ratification Henry was intriguing for his own ends with Philip. The close of this year was signalized by an extraordinary act of Philip. He publicly and solemnly made a general repudiation of his immense debts.

1597 was a busy year. It opened with a brilliant victory, gained by Maurice over a small but picked army of the Archduke. In less than an hour, with immensely inferior numbers, and a loss, in killed, of only nine or ten, he actually destroyed the force opposed to him. Two thousand of them lay dead upon the field, and five hundred prisoners were taken. In March the Spaniards surprised Amiens, which Henry retook in September. In August, September, and October Maurice conducted a campaign in which he "took nine strongly fortified cities and five castles, opened the navigation of the Rhine, and strengthened the whole eastern bulwarks of the Republic." The close of the year found Henry negotiating a peace with Spain, in spite of the indignation of Elizabeth and the strenuous opposition of Barneveld. In the year 1598 there was much diplomacy, much discussion, much delay, and at

last a treaty was concluded between Elizabeth and the States, and peace was made between France and Spain. Henry signed the Edict of Nantes at about the same time.

Philip died on the 13th of September, 1598, and the event is made the occasion of a review of his reign, and of an admirable sketch of the Spain of that time. The last chapter but one of volume three is one of the most interesting of all. It contains an account of Netherland commerce, and of the most remarkable voyages of the period, especially of Barendz's endeavor to discover a northeast passage to the Indies, and of the southern expedition in which Dirk Gerrits sailed nearer the south pole than man had ever been before.

The volume closes with a chapter made up of accounts of certain military operations and political dealings, none of which possessed much interest, or were followed by any important immediate results.

The military interest of the fourth volume centres in the battle of Nieuport and the siege of Ostend. The year 1599 was for the Republic, a year of defensive and uneventful campaigning. In the early summer of 1600, Maurice, in obedience to the States-General, but against his own judgment, invaded the obedient province of Flanders, and began the investment of Nieuport. He carried with him an admirable army, the flower of the troops of the Republic. The siege was not formed when he learned, to his infinite surprise, that the Archduke was upon him. He ordered his fleet to put to sea at once, and arrayed his army on the sands for a battle in which defeat would be its destruction, and perhaps the destruction of the Republic. Retreat was impossible, for they had only the barren sea behind them. The forces were nearly equal. The battle began at about two o'clock in the afternoon, and continued till near nightfall. Though the struggle was long and doubtful, yet things seemed to promise victory to the Spaniards till near the end, when the fortunes of the day changed as if by magic. The Catholics were broken in an instant by a charge of cavalry, and a compact army became a throng of runaways. Three thousand Spaniards were slain, which must have been more than a quarter of their force engaged. Maurice won a great victory, but his expedition, as an invasion, was a failure. Circumstances promised ill for renewing the attempt on Nieuport, and he withdrew his army into Holland on the last day of July.

The account of this important battle would be more satisfactory, if the reasons justifying Maurice's action in sending away the ships were developed, and if the failure of the garrison of Nieuport to make an attack or demonstration on Maurice's rear during the battle were explained.

In 1601 Ostend was the only possession of the Republic in Flanders. It was thoroughly fortified, and it was a base from which so much damage was inflicted on the Flemings, that it was called a thorn in the Belgic lion's foot. On the 5th of July, 1601, the Archduke came before the town, and began the siege. It lasted for three years and seventy-seven days. Every effort was made by the States to retain the place, and their command of the sea enabled them to furnish it with abundant supplies, and as many men as space permitted to be used to advantage. There, till the place was taken, the war was substantially concentrated. The greatest valor, industry, skill, endurance, and determination were displayed on both sides. At the end of the first quarter of the third year of the siege, the Marquis Spinola was appointed to the command of the operations against Ostend and of the foreign armies in the Netherlands. He was high-born and wealthy, but he had had no military training, and was in no way distinguished, except by birth and fortune. He owed his appointment to his readiness to furnish a large sum of money for the expenses of the siege, and the Spanish cabinet, weary of the slow progress of the undertaking, were willing to try a man who offered them money instead of asking for it. It soon appeared that his confidence in himself was not ill-founded. He saw that to take the city "he would be obliged to devour it piecemeal as he went on," and he acted accordingly. In spite of the obstinacy of the besieged, in spite of Maurice's endeavors to relieve the place, he ate his way into the heart of the city, until at last on the 20th day of September, 1604, when more than a hundred thousand men had laid down their lives in the attack and defence, and nothing but a mass of ruin was left to surrender, the garrison marched out with the honors of war, and the Archduke and his bride grasped their valueless prize.

"Ostendæ fatalis evasit Spinola spinam."

During the continuance of the siege the Netherlands had been vigorously pushing their commercial enterprises, and their armed fleets had won many victories over the subjects and allies of Spain in the East Indies. The determined sailors of the Republic turned these successes to the best account. Impressing the feeble natives with a deep sense of the power of the nation to which they belonged, they led many of them to throw off all connection with the Spanish power, and to form alliances and business relations with the States. Trade with the East Indies grew steadily and rapidly, and proved most profitable. In 1603 it was systematized by the formation of the Dutch East India Company. The Republic was also more than compensated, in advance, for the loss of Ostend, by the capture of

the excellent seaport of Sluys, which surrendered to Maurice in August, 1604.

Almost the whole of that part of the fourth volume which follows the account of the surrender of Ostend, is devoted to the protracted and tedious negotiations which ended in the Twelve Years' Truce. Before Ostend fell, Elizabeth had died, and England under James, and Spain under Philip III., were not what England and Spain had been under Elizabeth and Philip the Prudent. The able man who was on the throne of France knew that the interests of his kingdom demanded an interval of peace. Spain was far advanced in a decline, though the symptoms had not yet attracted general attention. War pressed very heavily on the Republic, and the high spirit of the people did not prevent them from being sensible of the weight of the burden. The tendency of the time was toward peace. So, though there was plenty of fighting, by land and sea, in the years which intervened between the surrender of Ostend and the conclusion of the arrangement for the truce, the relative position of the parties was not materially affected by force of arms. One great victory alone gave a lustre to the Dutch navy, and its magnitude probably had an influence upon the issue of the struggle. It was the victory gained by the Dutch fleet, under Heemskerck, on the 25th of April, 1607, in the Bay of Gibraltar, over a Spanish fleet commanded by Avila,—a victory so complete that the Spanish fleet was entirely destroyed.

During all this period the Spanish power declined with increasing rapidity, while the Dutch, notwithstanding that the question of making peace divided them into two parties and led to the unfortunate quarrel between Barneveld and Maurice, grew steadily stronger. Spain was in the hands of priests and courtiers, but as if the crippling of her commerce and destruction of her fleets by the Dutch abroad and every form of misgovernment at home were not sufficient, the expulsion of the Moors was ordered and executed in 1607, and thus a final blow was given to the productive power of the kingdom by the banishment of the most important part of her industrial population. The Dutch, on the other hand, though the defects in their form of government were serious, managed their affairs with great skill and success. All sorts of profitable industry were practised at home, and the nation was constantly pursuing a gainful traffic to all ports to which the four winds of heaven could waft their ships. Their navy was without an equal in the world, and their army, though small, was the best in Europe. Their financial system had the best of bases,—the ready submission of the people to taxation, and their making its burden easy to be borne by well-directed, unremitting industry.

But, whatever the spirit of a people and whatever its resources, there comes a time when they weary of war. The Netherlands had been fighting since 1566, and forty years is a long time for any people to be at war. So they were ready for peace, provided it could be admitted that they had conquered it, and provided they could retain the advantages they had won by downright hard fighting and obstinate persistence. Spain was far less able than they to continue the war, and was beginning to be dimly conscious of the fact. So first there came armistices and resumptions of hostilities, with discussions, conferences, correspondences; then terms would seem to be agreed upon; then there would be a rupture; then the work would be all done over again. The negotiations were endless. The inadmissible demands came from Spain, the delays came from Spain, the chicane, the ruptures, the everything unreasonable, came from Spain. The Republic would not give up the India trade, she would not permit the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion within her borders, and she insisted on being acknowledged by Spain as absolutely independent.

At last the end came. No treaty was made, but a Twelve Years' Truce was declared, and the United Netherlands gained substantially all they had been so many years fighting for. The agreement was signed on the 9th of April, 1609, and thus the Republic was formally admitted into the family of nations.

The volumes which treat of the events thus succinctly stated are full of interest, and yet we experienced a certain feeling of disappointment as we read them and laid them down. This might be, and no doubt was, partly owing to the fact that the persons and events of the closing period of the forty years' war are somewhat inferior in interest to those of its earlier periods; partly to the fact that the substantial sameness in the character of the struggle gives a shade of monotony to the advancing story; and partly to the fact that there is not so much new material employed in these volumes as there was in those which were enriched by the author's access to the long-closed archives of Simancas. But it must be confessed that these are not the only reasons. The style of these volumes is less brilliant than that of their predecessors, and it is disfigured by more frequent instances of carelessness, familiarity, exaggeration, and the excessive use of the ironic method. They need a revision by their author, and then another by a skilful and thorough proof-reader. And it still remains to be said that the books themselves do not belong to the most satisfying class of writing. They are rather the work of the graphic narrator than of the philosophic historian. They inform rather than instruct. In proportion as we become accus-

tomed to Mr. Motley's brilliant and vigorous style, his quick and true sympathies, his vivid conceptions, strong outlines, and warm colors, we begin to be conscious that his books are things "wherein we feel there is some hidden want." It is true that the age has gone by in which history required a certain dignity and state, but it is of comparatively little worth if it possess only the excellences, sustained through many volumes, which insure the success of a magazine article or a lyceum lecture. To select the leading persons and events of an interesting period, to study faithfully all the facts and details that can be known about them, to reproduce the story with all the charms that can be added by a lively imagination and a glowing style, to apply the most vigorous epithets of praise and blame as the author's sympathies direct, is the popular and easy, but not the best way to write history. Moreover, it is to be remembered that when a writer goes to the contemporary chronicles of a bygone period, and there seeks the earliest and most authentic information as to what men said and did, and what other men said about their sayings and doings, and fills his canvas from the materials so gathered, he does well, and his picture must have truth, but that if he be a man of an ardent temperament, and not largely endowed with the power of projecting himself into the past, it may prove that he has selected what to him, the child of the latest civilization, seems most salient and characteristic, and so has, in some respects, done more or less than justice to the characters, tendencies, and events of a past century, in holding them up to the gaze of the present.

To substantiate the charge of carelessness in composition is an easy task. Thus we read in Vol. III., on p. 30: "This result . . . made the downfall of the Commonwealth probable whenever it should be attacked by an overwhelming force from without." On p. 318: "Unless Henry was prepared to abdicate his hardly earned title to the throne of France." On p. 361: "He was not more likely to acquire the confidence of the Cardinal than he had done that of his predecessors." On p. 230 of Vol. IV., the two paragraphs which conclude the description of the destruction of Sarmiento's fleet begin respectively as follows: "Thus at least one half of the legion perished." "Thus nearly the whole of the Spanish legion perished." On p. 387 of the third volume we find the amount of the booty obtained at Cadiz stated at "not more than five hundred thousand ducats," and on p. 391, as "some millions of plunder." On p. 523 of Vol. IV. we read: "Other princes made not the slightest difficulty in recognizing it [the Dutch Republic] for an independent power." On p. 525: "The Republic now requested from France and Great Britain a written recognition of its indepen-

dence, and both France and England refused." Such instances might easily be multiplied.

Another proof of carelessness is found in contradictions and omissions, which we have no means of explaining or supplying. Thus, we read of Parma's complaint, when proceeding to the relief of Paris, that the country round it was eaten bare of food and forage, and that it was impossible for him to undertake to transport supplies for his army from the starving Netherlands to starving France; and yet, nine pages after, when he has raised the siege, we read that, in an incredibly short space of time, provisions and munitions were poured into the city, two thousand boat-loads arriving in a single day. The regular army of the Netherlands, in 1590, is described, on p. 5 of Vol. III., as composed of twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse; on p. 93, as composed of ten thousand foot and two thousand horse. The Cardinal-legate receives fifty thousand crowns from Pope Sixtus after Ivry; and the same Pope is soon after spoken of as dying without ever having bestowed on the League any of his vast accumulated treasures to help it in its utmost need. As an instance of an omission, it may be mentioned that no explanation is given of the means by which the credit of Spain was revived, after Philip's act of repudiation; and yet it appears (p. 333, Vol. IV.) that, in 1607, the kingdom had got credit to the extent of many millions, and pledged its income, for many years, to secure the debt. Then there are puzzling sentences, like that about the Turkish Empire (Vol. III. p. 413), and another (Vol. IV. p. 467) about the paltriness of the Netherlands, as a prize, if secured by Spain. Then there are statements that make the reader ask himself, "Why?"—statements that excite doubts as to their accuracy. We find the following incomprehensible sentence (Vol. IV. p. 621): "Matelieff succeeded, at last, in inspiring all the men of his command with an enthusiasm superior to sordid appeals, and made a few malcontents." The general reader may well be at a loss to understand why the treaty of Vervins should be declared to be as utterly disgraceful to Spain as that of Câteau Cambresis had been to France, when he reads, in another place, that the basis of the treaty of Vervins was that of the treaty of Câteau Cambresis, and is not told that the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum* was the principle of each treaty.

As instances of a too familiar style, we may mention that the Archduke Ernest is spoken of as "the podagric Perseus"; that we read as follows: "Spinola never reached Brussels until . . ." i. e. "did not reach Brussels," &c.; and that fifty pages after a description of the death of Farnese, and his burial in the robe and cowl of a Capu-

chin monk, we read: "On the death of brother Alexander the Capuchin Fuentes produced a patent"

To support the charge, that these volumes are disfigured by exaggeration, we will only refer to the statement, on p. 15, of Vol. III. in relation to the capture of Breda: "As an example of daring, patience, and complete success, it has served to encourage the bold spirits of every generation, and will always inspire emulation in patriotic hearts of every age and clime." It is much to be doubted whether many among the bold spirits and patriotic hearts of America ever so much as heard of this exploit, before these volumes were published; and it is much to be wondered at that such a scholar and writer as Mr. Motley should not only pen, but print, a sentence which he would have noted as extravagant, had he found it in a school-boy's theme.

Another fault, which is far too common, is the fault of repetition. Pet words and phrases, like "the Béarnese," as a synonyme for Henry IV., and "world-empire" are used over and over and over again, and it often happens that the same idea is presented frequently, when iteration is not needed to impress it on the mind. It is a pity, too, that one of the most popular, and justly popular, writers of the nineteenth century should use such phrases as "secundogenitures," "consultative bodies," the "Philippian policy," and "Hispaniolated counsellors," and speak of William as "the Taciturn," and of certain tribes as "internecine savages"; but one can easily pardon the slip to which we owe the amusing statement that "select crews of *entirely unmarried* men volunteered for the enterprise." Such phrases as a "humble, effaced existence," and "resuming all the arguments," are French, and not English. The phrase, "every well-stricken field of that age, between liberty and despotism," belongs to no language.

There might be noticed other faults, in the way of inappropriate digressions and apostrophes, bad arrangement of matter, by which the order of time is abandoned, with no apparent gain, and with more or less confusion to the reader, flippancies, and what may best be described as flatnesses, and especially the extremely frequent recurrence of the statement that, if some circumstance had been different, the result would or might have been different; but fault-finding is an ungrateful task; and we leave it, with the single additional remark, that we cannot think it in good taste to speak of Elizabeth, especially in a history of the United Netherlands, where her private character is not at issue, as "a queen who to loose morals, imperious disposition, and violent temper united as inordinate a personal vanity as was ever vouchsafed to woman."

It may seem that this censorious strain has been sustained too long.

It is not the expression of any want of sympathy with Mr. Motley's theories and principles, or distaste to his general style. On the contrary, we honor him heartily for his devotion to the cause of religious and political liberty, and we admire his genius. It does, however, seem matter of just regret that one on whom the literary reputation of this country so largely rests and whose influence on younger American writers is likely to be so powerful, should not take the little additional pains that would remove so many blemishes from his honorable work. It is very far from our intention to give the impression that these blemishes are so numerous as seriously to lessen the pleasure to be derived from these volumes. They are flaws, it is true, but flaws in a brilliant and precious jewel. All deductions made, it yet is true that the work is characterized throughout by clearness and precision of statement, by affluence of fine images and passages of genuine eloquence. The descriptions of battles, though something wanting in the order and accuracy which military experience would have enabled their author to give them, are picturesque and impressive. The exposition of those attributes of the Puritan character which gave it peculiar fitness for doing, daring, and suffering, is very striking. The account of the organized mutinies in the Spanish armies, which were among the most important incidents of the warfare of the period, is well worth the space the author has given to it. From his extensive reading he has drawn much interesting illustration of the degree to which the principles of religious toleration were taking root in men's minds at the close of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries. The liberal Christianity of the pronunciamiento of the Spanish mutineers, in 1602, may be noted as an extraordinary phenomenon.

Much more might well be said of this admirable history of some of the closing years of the great period of transition, when the fire of resistance to kings and priests refused to be stamped out, and burned the brighter for being fanned by the breath of war, when chivalry and the whole feudal system were yielding to the advance of that order to which we are accustomed in these latter days, when the sea was no longer whitened by the timorous sails of coastwise navigators only, but rolled its long swells beneath the mighty pinions that bore fearless sailors along the watery ways, to the very limits of the known world, and when, most wonderful of all, a little Republic of plain men, whose territory was coveted by the three most powerful monarchs of the time, and claimed as his incontestable right by not the least powerful of the three, of whose dominions it had long formed part, was able to secure its independence in spite of the heavy swords

and hardly less heavy purses that were brought against it. The nearly universal bribery of that age is almost beyond belief, but the Netherlands seem to have been creditably and singularly free from the taint.

Of Mr. Motley's accounts of the peoples and the commerce of that age there is nothing to be said except in terms of cordial praise. How far his portraits of individuals are to be accepted as faithful likenesses is a difficult question. We are inclined to think that his delineations of men with whom he is in sympathy are more to be depended on than his portrayal of those whom he dislikes. It may be remarked, however, that he hardly succeeds in showing, in his third volume, that Barneveld, during the period therein comprised, was as useful and important to the Netherlands as he there claims that he was. His full-length picture of Lerma, the favorite of Philip III., presents such an extraordinary personage that it is hard to believe that it is free from exaggeration. He does scant justice to Henry of Navarre, except as a soldier. He barely mentions his publication of the Edict of Nantes. But his representation of Philip II. is the one which demands to be most carefully scrutinized. That the character of Philip is one of the most odious recorded in history is not to be denied, and the atrocity of his persecutions is made worse by the fact that he sometimes relaxed their rigor to gain a temporal advantage; and yet, when we reflect that he was fully possessed with the doctrine of exclusive salvation, with all its attendant consequences, that he lived in an age of especial and exceptional indifference to human suffering, that "it was his enthusiasm to embody the wrath of God against heretics," * and read how he bore himself on his death-bed, as Mr. Motley tells the story, it is not easy to avoid the doubt whether the language of virulent denunciation is the only proper language to be used in speaking of him. There is a strict connection between guilt and the consciousness of guilt; and if Philip could wake to-day from a sleep of two hundred and seventy years, and read these volumes, and know that they expressed the opinion of him entertained by the majority of the most intelligent and educated classes of England and America, it is probable that his surprise would be even greater than his indignation.

* Rise of the Dutch Republic, Vol. II. pp. 178, 179.